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The Commonweal

February 25, 1949

Religion and Culture

Christopher Dawson

NEW RUHR POLICY

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THE AUTO WORKERS AND CO-OPS

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The
COMMONWEAL

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Economic Adjustments

ROUGHLY SPEAKING, interest in economics has been low during the past decade in relation to interest in plain politics. But it appears now that an important shift is going on in economics, so interest must turn to the complexities of buying and selling, producing and distributing, paying and being paid. Most analyzers say that the hurry-up of inflation has stopped, and a slowing-down started in the United States. Even for Europe, in Geneva, representatives of 23 European countries which are members of an "ECE" — Economic Commission for Europe's Committee on the Development of Trade—were told by their president that "the European economy had changed from a sellers' to and buyers' market."

The fall in the commodity markets, reduction in car loadings, downtrend in employment, and the other signs, have appeared at an embarrassing time for the US Government. The Truman economic program brought before Congress is primarily a check and control program, designed to govern more inflation. Now there is great uncertainty whether there will be more inflation to govern, and more worry lest there may be more important deflation to contend with. The economic uncertainty is one more big reason to make one suppose that the ambitiously projected Truman Deal will not get far in law or action. Whether these current business signs point to a short correction or to a broader deflation, the country will most likely have to sweat it out along lines already laid out, and will not have a new federal framework for getting along—or to get along with.

One of the most interesting uncertainties is whether or not the present economy is in such a condition that "corrections," or "deflations," or even "depressions" would strike all parts at once, across the board, as it were, reducing all the elements of the economy in the same rough proportion. Government economists seem to stress the probable variations and different probabilities for the different sections of the economy: different industries, different kinds of workers, different regions, etc. It is adjustments between the different parts rather than over-all action on everything at once which they seem to favor.

Swings of inflation or deflation have always in the past affected different categories of income in different ways. An interesting "Pictogram" in the Feb. 18 *U. S. News & World Report* shows how seven groups have benefited by the inflation since 1939, and how seven groups have economically suffered. The extremes are "bituminous coal workers," whose adjusted incomes are up 61%, and "persons living on interest from bonds," whose incomes after taxes, adjusted for higher costs since 1939, are down 45%. The charts indicate that the types who have benefited by the inflation are generally more strongly organized (except, conspicuously, "hired farm workers—up 57%"), and, it would appear, more powerful politically and propagandistically, and, it seems here, very strongly in numbers. Everybody, in a way, at first reaction, would like to see the cost of living go down; but it certainly seems most likely that a real fall in the cost of living would soon give rise to much louder groans than cheers.

When You Say That, Smile

ELEVEN YEARS ago, a panic was caused here by a dramatization of an invasion from Mars, made by Orson Welles from H. G. Wells's novel, "The War of the World." Then, the landing was supposed to have taken place in New Jersey, and many people did foolish and extravagant things in their fear. But their reaction, when they learned it was only another broadcast, was partly relief, and partly shame at having been taken in. No one even attempted to kill the announcers, no harm befell Radio City.

Very different were the results of a dramatization of the same incident put on in Quito, Ecuador, on February 12. The dramatization was prepared by the art director and the dramatic direc-

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tor of Radio Quito, without the knowledge of the station heads. The regular scheduled evening program was interrupted by a special announcer describing the arrival of the Martians, who were said already to have destroyed a city twenty miles away. Pretended government officials and priests urged the Ecuadoreans to keep calm; then the "mayor" of Quito supposedly announced that women and children should evacuate the city, and all men must prepare to defend their homes. Crowds fled into the streets in night attire. When army troops with tanks and tear gas attempted to restore order, they found the radio station burned, over a dozen people killed and many injured, by the outraged mob, which was compensating for its fear by its fury.

There is an adage about the peril of crying, "wolf, wolf"; and there is also an epic poem by Hilaire Belloc about Matilda who told such dreadful lies, it made one gasp and stretch one's eyes. As every reader will remember, Matilda, having summoned the fire-brigade once frivolously, when really her aunt's house was in flames, cried "Fire, Fire" to be answered by the mocking crowd with "Little liar." And so, the tale concludes, when her aunt returned, Matilda and the house were burned.

Never twice, they say, without a third time. Twice now, in two capital cities, panic has been thoughtlessly and deliberately induced. Perhaps the third time will come when there is real cause for terror, and the listeners will only laugh.

The public should never be pranked into panic: too much is at stake, and there may, alas, come a time when graver announcements than those dramatized may be carried in bitter truth by all the radio stations.

In this Quito case, the public's reaction seems to have been normal and healthy: they wrecked the radio station, with more than $350,000 damage. Practical joking has always been an insult to the intelligence of the average man, and its victims have every right, not to sympathy only, but to protest and protection. There is another angle to mull over. That we can turn on emotions like a tap is shown by these two alarming experiments in crowd psychology. That we cannot turn them off, or even slow them down, is demonstrated by Quito's sad experience. The air must be kept as ethical as stage or screen, as clean as the comics, as bloodless as a book-club, or in their shame, the people, the listeners, may do savage, irreversible wrong. Panic is one of the most savage things in the world—mad dogs, striking rattlers, moving avalanches are not more deadly. It was panic crushed nineteen people to death in a London air-raid shelter; panic that brought the Coconut Grove fire death roll in Boston to 491. That panic should be artificially, deliberately planned is entirely unpardonable and unnecessary. One must observe that old rule, "When you say that, smile."

Refugees from Palestine

WITH the meeting of the first Constituent Assembly of the State of Israel, a new social and political atmosphere begins to settle over the Near East. Even the Arabs are sulkily resigning themselves to the existence of this small state in their midst, so that now peace in the Near East hangs on the future political, rather than military, relations between Israel and the Arab states. These relations, complicated and emotional as they are, will not be carried on without some bitterness.

One immediate occasion of this strong feeling is the fact that the war there has uprooted old inhabitants of the land and has turned loose in the area 750,000 Moslem and Christian refugees, most of whom are Arab. Writing from Palestine, Anne O'Hare McCormick reports that "the transformation of the character and population of the country is the outstanding feature of the Israel scene. It is possible only because of the Arab exodus and is therefore achieved at the cruel price of the exile of at least half the former inhabitants. In the long run the price may prove cruel for Israel, too, fated as it is to live surrounded by Arab states. . . ."

Where these homeless wanderers will go is a question that must be answered before a stabile peace can exist in the Near East. Some of the Arabs refuse to return to their homes and property in Israel without guarantees of security from what they consider a hostile State; in the meantime, Jewish refugees pouring into Palestine have moved into the former Arab homes, farms and towns. While Israeli leaders have not advocated this Arab evacuation, they cannot be altogether disappointed at the departure from their State of these possibly unhappy co-inhabitants. The Israelis feel that there is room for the refugees in undeveloped Arab countries; Mrs. McCormick writes that Moshe Shertok, Israel's Foreign Minister, believes "that Israel should compensate the refugees for their property on the condition that the money be used constructively to settle them in new homes and not 'frittered away' in temporary relief measures." "New homes" would seem to mean Arab Palestine or elsewhere outside the State of Israel.

It is not a practical solution to expect neighboring Arab lands alone to absorb the refugees, since the insecure political and economic conditions of these lands cannot bear the burden. The Arabs feel that it is unjust to expect them to accommodate these thousands of refugees, and they have just put their case before the United Nations Palestine Conciliation Commission. To impose such a burden on the neighboring Arab lands will only intensify economic and political unrest and stir up Arab Nationalism and hostility in the area, a potential, surrounding force which Israel cannot afford to excite.

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Israeli statesmen will therefore be wise to see their responsibility toward the Palestinian refugees who have been made homeless in the process of forming the State of Israel; for those who cannot be rehabilitated in Israel, a just compensation must be found in discussion with the Arabs and the UN Commission. These refugees are displaced persons who merit fully the same charity already extended to European displaced persons of various lands, and their wandering plight cannot be ignored by Israel or by any of the United Nations who believe justice and security are essential to a peaceful life.

The Auto Workers & Co-ops

CAN IT BE that outside suggestions to labor unions to broaden their activities in constructive directions are inspired primarily to divert their attention and their energies away from their traditional rôle of ever pressing for an ever larger share in the returns from the enterprises which employ them? When prices of everything were spiralling, and round after round of wage demands sought to keep up with (and also themselves increased) the higher living costs, American business men came to feel that there was no end to the unions' wage objectives. Today, when the complexion of the situation is changing, union leaders are placing more stress on other elements such as job security and pension plans in their proposed new contracts.

The growing interest of the unions in consumers' cooperatives is likewise in accord with the current mood. It is not only that many union men foresee a return of days when pennies count, but that they are casting about for additional means of setting up some new modicum of economic security.

Attention has been drawn to the fact that the United Auto Workers are organizing cooperative stores in a rather serious way by the presence and address of Murray Lincoln of the Ohio Farm Bureau at the recent UAW educational conference at Milwaukee. And in reporting these union-sponsored operations and plans, the *Wall Street Journal* reveals the present mood by explaining how these new cooperative stores not only are open to all custom in true Rochdale style, but that they go out of their way to enroll everybody they can in the locality as members, in order that the stores be not wholly dependent on people all with the same source of income.

We are hoping in subsequent weeks to tell in some detail, in these pages, about the standardization of quality brands, the retail warehouse (a sort of urban general store) and other useful techniques which these new groups have developed in the Detroit and other areas, but for the moment wish to dwell on the possibilities opened up by this new union activity.

The chief of these is educational. At the outset union financing and management of retail and wholesale enterprises of a cooperative character provide the active members with an insight into the business process which is invaluable for anyone who has to do with labor-management negotiations. Furthermore, seeing that one's own cooperative makes a go of it gives a man a better grasp of his own job and its relation to his enterprise in general. If this were all, workers' co-ops might even serve as cleverly conceived tools of management, diverting energies, as suggested above, and tending to temper labor's wage demands.

But the educational potentialities of a cooperative movement with such a base go far beyond all this. Consider, for instance, the growing discovery by these men and women of what they can accomplish for themselves and their communities by organizing cooperatively. With the Auto Workers the movement has already in actuality or in blueprint extended to food, appliances, fuel oil, gasoline, tires, motor oil, work clothes, and housing. Once their group power as organized consumers is recognized union members will see that they are no longer dependent solely on the cold dollars and cents of their weekly wage for their well-being. They will also come to realize that they need no longer depend on the omnicompetent state in case of difficulties. They will have unmistakably learned that, in line with the hallowed American tradition, they can organize first locally and then on a wider basis to get needed things done by themselves. Union locals obviously have the initial advantage of a going organization, union funds and group solidarity.

A truly educative process, however, is never static. It has been found in Scandinavia, Nova Scotia and other areas where a full-fledged cooperative movement has taken hold that individual members in their desire for knowledge can not stop with economics or politics. New visions beckon to them, and the men and women who have been caught up in the movement are going on to supply the deficencies in their early schooling and to follow up the broad new interests that their cooperative activities have aroused in them as adults. That is why the UAW drive to organize co-ops among its million members—half-hearted in some cities, full steam ahead in others—is worthy of the widest notice. For if it once gets started on an all-out, major scale, there is no telling what this venture in economic democracy and adult education will accomplish.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN.

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The New Ruhr Policy

Toward an experiment in international cooperation

Clement de Haas

TO THE group of men who run German affairs and who will continue to run them for some time to come, 1949 is the year in which the return to power and freedom of action will really begin. We must expect the voice of Germany to be heard again in the councils of Europe—and we have all reason to expect it to be a querulous, defiant voice with tones of injured pride; perhaps even a rather arrogant voice in which we shall hear the Germans' realization that Europe cannot be secure and prosperous so long as they are neither prosperous nor content.

This has been said so often lately outside Germany—especially in the United States—that the echo is now coming back at us. Soon we must expect more than an echo; we shall feel the actual impact of a new nationalist German public opinion, something to be watched and handled with great care and courage.

This impact has in fact begun already in 1948, for in December last year the Western allies performed the first of the last three great acts of will towards a defeated Germany which are intended to mark the end of the immediate postwar epoch. America, Britain, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland—that is to say America plus the "Western European Union"—have announced their agreement on an international authority for the Ruhr, to control its development and general economic direction.

To put the matter in the simplest terms, Germany has been told that sovereignty over the greatest concentration of coal, steel and iron production in Europe is no longer hers alone: it is to be shared, by order, with six other nations. Whether the Germans like it or not, it is on them that the first experiment is tried in a supernational control of national groups of heavy industries.

It is clear that this is a bold, ambitious and forceful step which may need, sooner or later, the backing of force: and it is part of a policy designed to make Germany industrially strong but militarily harmless.

As already said, it is the first of three acts of will which have been expected by the Germans. The other two are: first, the effort to make the western Germans set up a government with an acceptable constitution and second, the attempt to lay down in a written "Statute of Occupation" what shall be the relations between the occupying powers and the new German Government. Of course, these three acts are connected; and one of the very first jobs of the new German Government when it is formed will be to take its place in the new Ruhr International Authority.

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GERMANY will have three votes out of the fifteen exercised by that body and, whatever may happen as far as the relations between the Allies and the German Government are concerned, one thing has been laid down in advance, that the heart of German industrial power is to be regulated by an Authority in which Germans can be outvoted by twelve votes to three—not just for a few years but for good, we hope.

It is not difficult to understand that this act by the Western Powers means different things to different peoples; it is a compromise among the views of six Allies with American views predominating. To the French it means a new method of "trying to make sure" that Germany remains disarmed and does not dominate its neighbors by its industrial strength. The three Benelux countries share in general the opinion of the French. To the British the scheme means a chance of introducing into European recovery the kind of cooperative planning that should provide some safeguards against cut-throat industrial competition in world markets.

To the Germans, of course, the sting lies in the loss of sovereignty over their main source of wealth.

The Ruhr always has been vital to Germany, more so now than ever because that area has to provide the greatest part of the exports with which Germany will eventually have to pay for most of its food. So it is not surprising that no one in Germany, so far, has had a good word to say for this Ruhr scheme.

Most businessmen allege and suspect a conspiracy of British, French and Belgian interests against the competition of German heavy industries.

The Social Democrats of western Germany who, I fear, may be the most powerful party in the years to come, read French fear and suspicion into every line of the scheme. What these Ger-

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mans all seem to resent is the distrust of Germany which they sense in the Allied announcement and the fact that no other nation shows, so far, any sign of submitting its major industries to similar international control. In fact, these Germans expected equality in Western European Union, and they find themselves instead junior partners on trial.

I think that the crux of the matter lies in this last objection, that the Germans are not treated as equals and seem called upon to make a sacrifice of sovereignty which no one else shows signs of making. Yet some weeks ago an Allied official statement had quite a lot to say on this point.

In six out of eighteen paragraphs there is the assurance that the main object of the scheme—apart from disarmament—is to get Germany cooperating fully and freely in the economic recovery and reorganization of Europe. It refers to a desire to promote that intimate association of the economic life of the countries of Europe which in the last analysis alone can assure a peaceful and prosperous Europe. And again the statement says that it is the purpose of the six powers "to provide the means by which a peaceful democratic Germany can be brought into the European community to play its part as a fully responsible and independent partner."

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IF THERE are to be other international authorities in Europe giving general direction to the investment, production and marketing of great national industries; and if other governments are going to surrender some degree of sovereignty, then the scheme may work well. Then there will be a chance that Germans who trust our good intentions and who really want to see a new pattern in western Europe will be able to command the support of the majority of German public opinion.

But if some evidence of these good intentions is not pretty soon shown, the German Government of the future—of 1949—will have a sorry time of it in its dealings with the new Ruhr Authority.

The Germans are very skilful grumblers, and whatever goes wrong in the economic life of the country will be attributed to the interference of the Authority; and not entirely without reason, for whoever controls the Ruhr coal and steel in fact controls the German economy. And in trying to foresee the consequences of this control scheme, we must remember too that the Ruhr is not an industrial complex, as the textbooks call it.

The Ruhr is just as much a society of tough, highly skilled, politically-conscious individuals—some of the best workmen in Europe. Twenty-five years ago they showed the French that coal cannot be dug with bayonets; and they can still organize a campaign of passive resistance as well as any group in the world.

We should all realize that the way the Ruhr-worker behaves has repercussions all over Europe. Most of them are Social Democrats, men with a way of thinking which might respond to the general idea of western cooperation, provided that they could see that the sacrifices to be made for it were made all round and not by Germany alone.

It is not my purpose to try to arouse sympathy for the Germans in this matter—they are quite capable of doing that themselves—but to weigh some of the risks of our new policy; and I have stressed the dangers of the new Ruhr scheme because I think we must realize that the new plan can be imposed by force but it cannot be worked by force, once Germany is politically organized. And to realize how true this is, recall what the main functions of the new Authority would be. First, it has to divide the coal, coke and steel of the area between German domestic needs and the needs of the other countries. Then it has to see that international trade is not upset by German use of quotas, tariffs and other measures of discrimination. Later on, the Authority will have to take over from present Allied control groups for coal and steel, the general supervision of production, development and investment in these key industries.

If there is to be no detailed personal control over management, such as the French wanted and would still like, how are the Allies to prevent evasion if the Germans refuse to cooperate and if we are not ready to use force?

The official statement does not answer this question.

And so the chief problem of Western Europe's relations with Germany remains strikingly similar to what it was twenty-five years ago, in 1923. How can the Germans be given a vital interest in submitting cooperatively to control by their neighbors? How can it be proved to ordinary German workmen and their political leaders that such model behavior will pay?

It can only be done by eventually giving the German Government a voice in other nations' affairs. For instance, in directing the production of the French and Belgian heavy industries, or in the fixing of the price of British coal, or in the planning of Dutch agriculture.

It will, I am sure, take time for the Government of the Western European Union to find and agree on new forms for such collaboration. After all, it has taken them since February last year to reach agreement on this Ruhr Authority. But the search for these new forms must not take too long or we shall find that Germany's attitude is becoming fixed and that new quarrels are instigated.

It is no good shutting our eyes to the fact that

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this new experiment in international cooperation is dictated to the Germans; that it hits them in a sensitive spot and that it shows little faith in German goodwill and—most important for all Germans—that it has given much satisfaction in France.

It represents a compromise between reckless American views on Germany, French views that are, in my opinion, twenty-five years out of date, and British views that are neither as clear nor as determined as one could wish.

But if the scheme can be made to work—and there is no reason why it could not—Europe will have taken a big step forward towards a new way of running its economic life.

The Relation Between Religion and Culture

Christopher Dawson

THERE is still a certain amount of distrust of the sociological concept of culture among historians and men of letters, owing to the feeling that it is an alien importation into our language. Since the days when Tylor wrote his book on Primitive Culture, however, it has been adopted so widely by anthropologists and ethnologists, that it seems pedantic to object to a word which has acquired a scientific status as a specific term for which there is no satisfactory alternative.

A social culture is an organized way of life which is based on a common tradition and conditioned by a common environment. It is therefore not identical with the concept of civilization which involves a high degree of conscious rationalization nor with society itself, since a culture normally includes a number of independent social units.

The fact that a culture is a way of life adapted to a particular environment involves a certain degree of social specialization and the canalization of social energies along certain lines. We see this most clearly in the case of isolated marginal cultures, like that of the Esquimaux in the Arctic or that of the Bushmen in South Africa. In these cases the inter-relation of social organism, economic function and geographical environment is so complete that culture becomes inseparable from race.

But this does not mean, as the racialists believe, that culture is the result of predetermined racial inheritance. On the contrary it would be more true to say that race is the product of culture, and that the differentiation of racial types represents the culmination of an age-long process of cultural segregation and specialization at a very primitive level, just as in modern times nationality and the differentiation of national types is the result of the growth of special cultural traditions rather than vice versa.

It is indeed remarkable how rapidly the human type is modified or transformed by a new way of life or a new environment. Take a few hundred thousand nineteenth century English and Irish, transplant them to Australia and let them adapt their social habits and organization to this new environment, and in a century you find a new human type which is both physically and psychologically different from that of the parent society.

Nevertheless in spite of these far-reaching changes, the factor of cultural tradition remains predominant. The new Australian type is not a variety of the native Australian type but of the British type, so that to an Australian aboriginal the two will probably appear so similar as to be indistinguishable. For the way of life of any particular society exerts so powerful an influence on its individual members that hereditary differences of character and predisposition are worked into the pattern of culture as the multi-colored threads are woven into the design of a fabric. Thus culture is the form of society. The society without culture is a formless society—a crowd or a collection of individuals brought together by the needs of the moment—while the stronger a culture is, the more completely does it inform and transform the diverse human material of which it is composed.

What then is the relation of culture to religion? It is clear that a common way of life involves a common view of life, common standards of behavior and common standards of value, and consequently a culture is a spiritual community which owes its unity to common beliefs and common ways of thought far more than to any uni-

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formity of physical type. Now it is easy for a modern man living in a highly secularized society to conceive this common view of life as a purely secular thing which has no necessary connection with religious beliefs. But in the past, it was not so. From the beginning man has already regarded his life and the life of society as intimately dependent on forces that lie outside his own control—on superhuman powers which rule both the world and the life of man. "No man," said an Indian hunter, "can succeed in life alone, and he cannot get the help he needs from men."

This conviction that "the way of man is not in himself," that it is not for man to walk and direct his own steps, is as old as humanity itself. We can find most clear and moving expressions of this belief among the primitive peoples—most of all perhaps among the hunting peoples like the North American Indians whose conception of dependence on spiritual powers has been described with exceptional fulness by a series of excellent scholars and observers, like I. O. Dorsey, F. Boas and Ruth Benedict.

But it is also found amongst much more primitive races, and needless to say in all the higher religions.

Therefore from the beginning the social way of life which is culture has been deliberately ordered and directed in accordance with the higher laws of life which are religion. As the powers of heaven rule the seasons, so the divine powers rule the life of man and society, and for a community to conduct its affairs without reference to these powers, seems as irrational as for a community to cultivate the earth without paying any attention to the course of the seasons. The complete secularization of social life is a relatively modern and anomalous phenomenon. Throughout the greater part of mankind's history, in all ages and states of society, religion has been the great central unifying force in culture. It has been the guardian of tradition, the preserver of the moral law, the educator and the teacher of wisdom.

And in addition to this conservative function, religion has also had a creative, conative, dynamic function, as energizer and life giver. Religion holds society in its fixed culture pattern, as in Plato's Laws, or as in the hierarchic order of Sumerian and Egyptian culture; but it also leads the people through the wilderness and brings them back from captivity and inspires them with the hope of future deliverance.

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RELIGION is the key of history. We cannot understand the inner form of a society unless we understand its religion. We cannot understand its cultural achievements unless we understand the religious beliefs that lie behind them. In all ages the first creative works of a culture are due to a religious inspiration and dedicated to a religious end. The temples of the gods are the most enduring works of man. Religion stands at the threshold of all the great literatures of the world. Philosophy is its offspring and is a child which constantly returns to its parent.

And the same is true of social institutions. Kingship and law are religious institutions and even today they have not entirely divested themselves of their numinous character, as we can see in the English coronation rite and in the formulas of our law courts.

All the institutions of family and marriage and kinship have a religious background and have been maintained and are still maintained by formidable religious sanctions. The earliest social differentiation and the one that has had the most potent influence on culture has been due to the development of specialized social classes and institutions, charged with the function of maintaining relations between society and the divine powers. The fact that this class has almost invariably been responsible in whole or in part for the education of the community and the preservation of sacred tradition and learning gives it an exceptional importance in the history of culture; and we must study the specific form it takes in any particular culture or religion before we can begin to understand it. The Sumerian and Egyptian temple priesthoods, the Brahmin caste in ancient India, the clergy and the monastic orders in mediaeval Christendom are not merely religious institutions, they are also vital social organs in their respective cultures. And the same is true of the Shamans, the medicine men and witch doctors among primitive peoples although our current terminology often blurs the distinction between the sorcerer, whose function is non-social or anti-social, and the priest, who is the recognized religious organ of the community—a confusion which has been increased by the attempt to draw a rigid and exclusive line of division between religion and magic.

The more primitive a culture is, of course, the less room there is for an explicit differentiation of social functions, but on the other hand, the more directly is its religion bound up with the elementary needs of life, so that the social and economic way of life is more clearly interpenetrated by and fused with religion than is the case in the higher cultures.

Thus among the Australians there was no true priesthood and the leadership in religion as in other matters fell to the old men who were the natural leaders of the tribe and the guardians of tradition. Nevertheless they possessed a most elaborate and highly organized system of religious rites to ensure the continuity of the life of the tribe and the maintenance of its food supply —a regular liturgy, which in some instances, as described by Spencer and Gillen, occupied the

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community almost continuously for three or four months at a time. In this case the way of life of the community is conceived as dependent on another and a sacred world—the world of the divine totemic ancestors—from which the spirit comes and to which it returns, and the totemic ceremonies provide the way of access and communion between the life of the tribe and the other world of the sacred *alcheringa* age.

It is difficult for a civilized man to understand either the religious significance or the cultural importance of such ceremonies. But to the primitive the dance or mime is at once the highest form of social activity and the most powerful kind of religious action. Through it the community participates in a mystery which confers supernatural efficacy upon its action. How this may affect social life and change the course of historical events may be seen in the rise of the Ghost Dance religion among the Indians of the Plains at the end of the nineteenth century. Here we have a well attested case of how a dance may become the medium by which the religious experience of an individual may be socialized and transmitted from one people to another with revolutionary political effects. Vovoka, an Indian of a little known and unimportant tribe in Nevada, received in a vision a dance the performance of which would bring back the spirits of their dead ancestors and the vanished herds of buffalo and the good times that were past. The dance cult spread like wildfire eastward across the mountains to the Indians of the great plains and finally stimulated the Sioux to their last desperate rising against the United States Government.

The most remarkable thing about this movement was the extreme rapidity with which it communicated itself from people to people across half the continent, so that if it had not been defeated by a hopeless inequality of material power, the Ghost Dance might have changed not only the religion but also the social existence of the Indians of the Middle West in the course of a few years. Such revolutionary changes are in fact by no means rare in history. We have an example of it on the higher religious level and on a vast historical scale in the case of the rise of Islam. Here we see in full clearness and detail how a new religion may create a new culture. A single individual living in a cultural backwater originates a movement which in a comparatively short time sweeps across the world, destroying historic empires and civilizations and creating a new way of life which still moulds the thought and behavior of millions from Senegal to Borneo. And in this case there is no common geographical environment or racial inheritance to form a basis for the spiritual community. A common faith has imposed its stamp on the most diverse human material so that the resultant product is even physically recognizable. The Arab of the desert, the West African negro, the Malay pirate, the Persian philosopher, the Turkish soldier, the Indian merchant all speak the same religious language, profess the same theological dogmas and possess the same moral values and the same social conventions. Just as Moslem architecture is different in every country but is everywhere unmistakably Moslem, so it is with this literature and speech and behavior.

No doubt modern nationalism and secularism have altered all this, but they have done so only recently and superficially and incompletely. Islam still exists as a living culture as well as a world religion.

★

THUS Islam provides a classic example of how culture—the social way of life—may be transformed by a new view of life and a new religious doctrine, and how as a result social forms and institutions may be created which transcend racial and geographical limits and remain fixed for centuries. And on the other hand we have countless examples—especially among primitive peoples—of religions which are so bound up with the culture of the community that they seem to be mere psychological reflections of the way of life of a particular people in a particular environment and to possess no religious significance apart from their social background. But however earthbound and socially conditioned these religions appear to be, they always look beyond society to some trans-social and superhuman reality towards which their worship is directed.

And conversely, however universal and spiritual a religion may be, it can never escape the necessity of becoming incarnated in culture and clothing itself in social institutions and traditions, if it is to exert a permanent influence on human life and behavior.

For every historic religion from the lowest to the highest agrees on two fundamental points: first in the belief in the existence of divine or supernatural powers whose nature is mysterious but which control the world and the life of man; and secondly in the association of these powers with particular men, or things, or places or ceremonies, which act as channels of communication or means of access between the human and the divine worlds. Thus on the lowest levels of culture we find the Shaman, the fetish, the holy place and the sacred dance, while on the higher level we have the prophet and priest, the image or sacred symbol, the temple and the sacramental liturgy. Thus every great historic culture, viewed from within through the eyes of its members, represents a theogamy, a coming together of the divine and the human within the limits of a sacred tradition.

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CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The Appeal of Communism

"COMMUNISM is a scourge sent into a de-Christianized society because it has failed to translate into practice the Christian doctrines of social justice and to make the brotherhood of man a reality," Manuel Cardinal Goncalves Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon, declared in a radio address delivered in the last week of January. Communism cannot be exterminated by police measures, he warned, but can be overcome only by social justice and Christian brotherhood.

"The accusations which Communism has been launching against present-day society are not entirely unfounded," the Cardinal declared. "Although Christian by tradition, Western civilization is dominated by secularism which has deprived society of Christian spirituality. . . . Viewed in this light, Communism is nothing but the last logical step in the process of de-Christianization."

Communism, the Cardinal Patriarch stated, has been able to grow strong because "it has become a religion for those who are without religion: a totalitarian concept of life, a mystical doctrine of salvation without Christ. It has spread because it appeals to the legitimate desires of men who are hungry for social justice and world brotherhood." (Lisbon, 2/7—CIP.)

Improvement in Red China

QUINTINUS PESSERS, OFM, Prefect Apostolic of Kiangchow in the Province of Shansi, who was imprisoned by Chinese Communist forces November 7, 1947, and released in May, 1948, is now well enough to say Mass, according to missionaries who have just returned from that province. Another priest, Father Dositheus Ruys, and four nuns, who shared imprisonment with the Prefect, are also said to be improving in health since their release.

The priests and the nuns have elected to stay in Communist-held territory. They have been allowed a certain amount of freedom, and have been granted permission to reopen the hospital in Kiangchow, according to the same sources. During the past few months, these sources stated, the Communists have not undertaken any further persecution of the Church in this area, so that the situation has at least temporarily improved. (The Hague, 2/10—CIP:)

Czech Bishops Notify Government of Unity in Face of Attacks

THE CATHOLIC Bishops of Czechoslovakia served notice on the Czech Government that the clergy and the Bishops in Czechoslovakia stand united in the face of Government efforts to divide them. A joint memorandum to this effect, later broadcast by the Vatican Radio, was adopted at a recent meeting of the Bishops in Prague.

"Despite the promises of religious liberty that have been made," the Bishops declared, "an offensive has been launched against the Church. It follows the same pattern of attacks as in other countries."

The Bishops mentioned numerous instances of the efforts made in past months to sever ties between the Czech clergy and the Bishops, and named four specific types of attacks against the Church and the faith: 1) violation of the rights of the Church in the form of restrictions on the apostolic work of high ecclesiastical authorities; 2) suspicions cast upon some priests who refrain from all political activity; 3) the limitations placed upon the free operation of Catholic schools, Catholic relief organizations, the Catholic press, and public religious manifestations; 4) the confiscation of Church properties without compensation, affecting the livelihood of many religious orders.

In their memorandum, the Bishops renewed earlier assurances that they are willing to fulfill their rightful obligations toward the State and the Government. (Prague, 2/2—CIP.)

Trieste Bishop Says Yugoslavia Would Free Archbishop Stepinac if Re-assigned

THE CONVICTION that the Yugoslav Government would agree to free Archbishop Aloysius Stepinac of Zagreb, if the Holy See would order his reassignment to another country, was voiced by Bishop Antonio Santin, of Trieste, in an exclusive interview with a representative of CND, the German CIP affiliate. Bishop Santin pointed out that "the Holy See continues to maintain its present position because of the Yugoslav Government's continuing anti-religious stand and because the Holy See does not wish to betray the people of Yugoslavia."

Archbishop Stepinac, who was condemned to sixteen years of hard labor in 1946, at the age of 48, is in good health, according to Bishop Santin, who said he is in receipt of current reports on the Archbishop's condition. Archbishop Stepinac is permitted to read, he said, and to walk in the prison garden with two other priest prisoners.

The treatment accorded Archbishop Stepinac should not be interpreted as a sign of a change in the strained relations between Yugoslavia and the Holy See, Bishop Santin emphasized. He asserted that arrests of priests continue in Yugoslavia, and that priests are denied the means of fulfilling their duties and of obtaining the necessities of life. (Trieste, 2/1—CIP.)

Italian Communists Intensify Anti-Religious Attitude

AN ANALYSIS of the speech which the Communist leader and former Vice Premier, Palmiro Togliatti, delivered at Bologna, as well as of the Italian Communist Party's appeal on the anniversary of Lenin's death, shows that the anti-religious and anti-Catholic line is being intensified in Italy. While the Communists tried until recently to play the left wing of the Christian Democratic Party against the right wing and the center, Togliatti declared in his Bologna speech that the left wing Christian Democrats are "too clerical to be democratic."

Italian Communists are also known to take an active part at present in the specifically anti-Catholic MAILS movement (Italian Anti-Clerical Movement for a Secular State, Movimento Italiano per la Laicita dello Stato). (Rome, 2/12—CIP.)

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Communications

CATHOLICS IN CONGRESS

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: My attention has been called, by some of my constituents, to your article which appeared in the January 14th, 1949, edition of THE COMMONWEAL.

In your article you have my vote recorded as anti-progressive, on Portal to Portal Pay. If you will refer to my voting record on this measure, as listed in the Congressional Record, page 1573, dated February 28th, 1947, you will find that I was one of the 56 members of the Congress that voted **Progressive.**

I will be deeply grateful if you will have this correction made, in one of your future articles.

Congressman MICHAEL J. KIRWAN.

US-SOVIET RELATIONS

Briarcliff Manor, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In your editorial, "While There Is Yet Hope," February 4th issue, you say: "There has always been a considerable body of opinion, East and West, to the effect that war between Western democracy and Russian Communism is inevitable. And it may be."

There were two particularly significant statements in the "Historicus" article in January *Foreign Affairs.* The first was: "The earlier Marxist doctrine of 'increasing misery' of the proletariat was modified by Lenin and others in view of *the observable fact* that workers were not getting poorer."

The second was a quotation from Stalin's writings: "If capitalism could adapt production not to getting maximum profit but to the systematic improvement of the material conditions of the masses of the people . . . then there would not be any crises. But then also capitalism would not be capitalism."

Now let us pick up another quotation from recent articles; one from the Washington correspondent of the *New Republic,* January 17th, will do as well as any: "Come the Revolution, shall we recognize it? Consider what President Truman told the 81st Congress. . . . He called for extension of government authority beyond anything Roosevelt ever proposed. . . . When the breath-taking speech was over, the stock market went up. Do we ever really know a Revolution when we see it?"

Tie these together and you reach this conclusion: That American capitalism is no longer the kind of capitalism Marx was talking about; that its emphasis has already shifted from maximum profit to the systematic improvement of the material conditions of the masses of the people; and that from this "observable fact" Stalin and his associates, who are realists, must again modify their Marxian doctrine—in particular that phase of it dealing with the inevitability of war with capitalist countries.

Given a reasonable amount of Christian tolerance, we are bound in time to reach a practical working agreement with the Soviet Union.

DAVID M. FIGART.

COMMENTS ON FEB. 4 ISSUE

Sunnyside, Wash.

TO THE EDITORS: What you say on the Columbia Valley Authority sounds good to me personally, but I am afraid you would find very, very few people around here in favor of a CVA. The general opinion seems to be a) that the existing agencies can do all that is needed, b) that a CVA would mean socialism, big government, regimentation and remote control from Washington. You may say that this is all poppycock, but you forget that all our dailies here are opposed to a CVA, and our favorite radio commentator, Fulton Lewis, Jr., and his equals, and our chambers of commerce, large power companies, etc., are all against it. Above all, don't forget that some of the strongest state governments here are opposed. The Tennessee Valley was a depressed area. You'd better not say such a thing about us here with the biggest apples, biggest potatoes, biggest dams, biggest hop-yards and biggest atom plants in our backyard. We don't need anybody's help (except a dozen more big dams, of course!).

F. J. Schoeningh's article [the same issue] is a splendid piece. The translator only made one slip: *Binnen-Wanderung* means "internal migration," referring to the forced migration of Germans from the ceded East and Iron Curtain countries into other German states, or in normal times, the migration from town to city, country to town.

REV. H. A. REINHOLD.

THE ACTU AND ITS CRITICS

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: All contending parties here agree on the basic proposition that the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists is a necessary and constructive element in American life. Further, few are so deluded as to believe that ACTU is constituted as a citadel of belief among the infidels; ACTU is not a religious bloc *in se.* ACTU can serve the end of imparting to both trade unionists of Catholic and non-Catholic religious persuasions principles of truth and equity which flow from natural law and are supernaturalized by Christ and His Church.

At a period in American history when labor is still in a rare mood of shifting its outlook, it is imperative within the unions as well as in society generally that there be hammered out in the concrete context of current situations whatever may be the meaningful contributions to our times of the tradition of natural law.

Many observers agree that the objections liberals raise against "outside interference" by religious groups in political and economic life stem from confusing historical situations with basic principles. There are those extremists in liberalism who would banish Christ the Worker from union membership; and there are those who are concerned with the possibility that religious groupings in occupational organizations may cause internal division and defeat of the legitimate interests of the broad working masses.

The present controversy, at least from one point of view, seems to be one of means, not ends. In some instances, a confusion of means with ends. Certainly some of the rank and file in the United Office and Professional

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Workers could resent the indictment of UOPWA leaders by a Catholic priest as a strategic move, during a union election, against Communist union leaders. Communism should be exposed to the merciless spotlight of objective inquiry wherever and whenever necessary.

However, desperation or over-zealousness is no substitute for adequate recognition that group responsibility demands its own specific obligations. An external agent may instruct or exhort; he cannot, except to his peril, demand or act within a group to which he has no functional affiliation. Moral suasion is not political or economic authority. To fulfill one function is no title to assume the other. The possible immediate good coming from such direct intervention as that of the well-intentioned priest in the UOPWA election not only violates the integrity and autonomy of the union involved, but offers free grist for the ceaseless propaganda mills of Communists and other extremists who disseminate the myth of a Catholic plot to dominate labor union affairs. We should no more give substance to the shadow of Communist propaganda than we should be paralyzed by its threats from taking legitimate action.

Is not the ACTU's basic premise the instruction of trade unionists who are Catholics in the application of ethics to union activity and in their responsibility as trade unionists in justice to their fellow workers, to their union, to their industry, to the national economy, to the nation and to Almighty God? It has not been organized to establish any sort of "party-line." The ACTU is not an accretion to trade unionism; rather it is a means of fostering in the trade unionist a growing realization of the significance of his form of occupational existence. It brings trade unionism to its full dimensions. In other words, ACTU is not conceived as a political fraction in trade unions; it does not rule or ruin according to extra-union doctrinaire points of view. ACTU seeks to illuminate democratic trade unionism through a full vision of its potentialities for common welfare and human good. Recognition of principles involves a responsibility to exercise them. And if in the light of these principles, union officials are found wanting, it is not for the priest but for the informed democratic trade unionist to draw up the indictment and render the verdict on those who, for extra-union loyalties or self-interest, betray their trust.

Some persons who have confused the positive activity of ACTU with a negative policy of red-baiting now hope that with Communism out of the labor picture, the AQTU will generously commit hari kari. ACTU is needed as much today as it was years ago when John Cort and Marty Wersing first inspired it. We remember when in the city of Detroit during 1939 the now unified UAW-CIO was torn asunder by political fractions: Communist gangsters, Labor intellectuals and men-behind-the-scenes. Although Catholics formed the bulk of the membership of the UAW-CIO, they played little but a passive rôle in the fight over Homer Martin. But as the Detroit ACTU grew—during and after the UAW factional fight—ACTU aided quietly and effectively in the development of a sound rank-and-file leadership who will in time play a more important part in the affairs of their union.

If Communism has been largely repudiated in the labor union movement and has run its course, the ACTU is just beginning to enter the struggle for a genuine reconstruction of the American social order. There will be no true democracy within the unions until the rank-and-file are consciously animated with clearly defined motivating objectives and standards of judgment about means. This is the task before the ACTU as it now enters its most positive phase.

Objective information is peculiarly welcome at present. An informed rank-and-file will not permit exploitation by opportunists who view the labor movement as a quick and powerful means of personal aggrandizement nor by calculating ideologists or by labor racketeers.

The means of attaining the positive program of AQTU, like any other system of tactics, must be hammered out on the anvil of group experience and consultation under the pressure of current events. With real unity of ends among the supporters of ACTU, there may be generous recognition of freedom of means.

RICHARD L-G. DEVERALL.
ROBERT J. O'DONNELL.

SHORT STORY CONTEST

Davenport, Iowa

TO the Editors: I should like respectfully to call to your attention the Catholic Press Association's annual short story contest closing March 31. Prizes are $1,000, $500, and $250. Each manuscript gets careful consideration, and final judges this year are Wilbur Schramm, Leo Jacks and Richard Sullivan. Anyone may have particulars by writing to Box 389 Davenport, Ia.

Rev. B. L. BARNES,
CPA Awards Chairman.

The Stage & Screen

Richard III

RICHARD WHORF'S production of the Old York homicide is the most extraordinary show I have ever beheld. While there is certainly no question of the sincerity and goodwill at stake in the business—even, one admits, of some of the talent—it is sadly necessary to add that all of the effects are just plain ludicrous. So ludicrous, in fact, and so incessant that one cannot absorb them sufficiently to reach acting performances at all. Advance promotion informed us that this is a GI version of the tragedy contrived by Mr. Whorf for army audiences in Europe shortly after VE Day. And it has lately been seen by the Boston public as part of the ill-fated repertory theatre operating there at the Copley. Now, Boston aside, there is, after all, very little sense in supposing that a GI version of anything theatrical ought to appeal to Broadway. The honest rigmaroles attendant upon preparing a Shakespeare for thousands upon thousands of good, if intellectually indifferent, soldiers are not as honestly applicable

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to a momentarily civilian world. Mr. Whorf's backers appeared to believe that the extreme economy of the production—I believe the whole thing cost as little as $15,000—ought to elicit astonishment as well as attendance. And there I think they had a point. On the other hand, it is not of course economy *per se* which is laudable, but rather economy with *style;* a circumstance which Mr. Whorf's present wrestle with the dollar never achieves. His designs are merely painted imitations of the usual architectural arrangements—arches and alleys—together with the trite and overdone pit-entrance plan. And none of this is particularly tastefully accomplished. But it is when you come to Richard Barr's lighting scheme that the affair declines into nonsense. Mr. Barr employs an arbitrary spot arrangement with the stage lit only by beams of light. This is always a difficult deal for actors, since even the most trained will often lose their spot on occasion, and in any case, they are thereby denied any natural freedom of motion. Added to this, however, is the further fact that these spots are colored and the colors constitute clues for the pith of the lines being spoken. When Richard is most dire, for instance, the entire stage is bathed in a bloody glow; when he is not present, all is bright-white; before any of his soliloquies, there is a blackout; and then the jerk between *rouge et blanc* begins again. It is quite impossible to describe the interference of attention caused by this ridiculous device, but when I tell you that the color-cycle occurs often within the space of a single speech, you will understand how much one can hear and absorb of the drama.

As they are almost always steadily albescently lit, it is not too difficult to discover that the women of the piece are very good indeed. Grace Coppin as Margaret is firmly impressive, and Frances Reid and Polly Rowles deal with the younger Queens with grace and clarity. For reasons already stated, I could not get through to Mr. Whorf's reading at all. Upon reflection, I would hazard that he lacks build: he's all black (red, I mean), from the outset, and so much so, as to lack conviction on both sides of the foots. Mr. Barr's abysmal direction of the battle scene loses him entirely in a mess of silhouettes plus a hoarse voice reiterating the "horse" entreaty. Perhaps the most astounding interpretation will be that of Nehemiah Persoff's Tyrell which seriously delivers, in a prepared hush, the most exact Laurence Olivier impersonation possible. Every Olivier quirk, nuance, falter of speech is here. It's perfect, and perfectly silly. In conclusion, if a "Richard in Rubric" has ever seemed possible, intelligent, useful, instructive, or thrilling, I can only assure you that here it is. (*At the Booth.*)

Diamond Lil

READERS of this column will not need to be reminded that I count myself a Mae West fan: if not one of the oldest, at least one of the steadiest. But what confuses me—in respect of this present revival—is, *What Was All The Shooting For?* The fact that anything so consciously funny, consciously foolish, consciously stagey, and certainly skilled, should ever have been considered a matter for law and/or the pulpits is incomprehensible. The business is an innocent delight: neatly set, nicely cast, and sporting, of course, one of the most astute actresses of our time in all of her traps. And hats. I'd call it good plain fun. (*At the Coronet.*)

My Name Is Aquilon

PHILIP BARRY, doubtless for reasons of his own, assists the Theatre Guild in another international mistake: a translation of Jean Pierre Aumont's play in which the author stars. The piece is inexplicable matinée nonsense, dealing with a Resistance hero who incurs postwar trouble because of his incredible charm. I should say its only excuse will be the introduction of the actress Lili Palmer to the street. Unless, of course, the inclusion of some Stewart Chaney sets and what John Chapman so succinctly calls "women's needlework by Valentine," should tempt you to want to exchange tickets for no play. (*At the Lyceum.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Unbending the Twig

IT IS frequently difficult in reviewing a good film to decide who should get major credit, and usually the critic comes to a conclusion that he had reached a long time ago: a movie is the result of good collaboration. *"The Quiet One"* is an extraordinarily good movie, and credit for its superiority should go to all the people who worked on it. To Janice Loeb, Helen and William Levitt, Sidney Meyers, who are members of the new film company, Film Documents, Inc., and who worked on the production, direction, editing, story and photography. To James Agee who wrote the exceedingly fine commentary and dialogue. To Dr. Viola Bernard who acted as psychiatric consultant. And to many others including the large number of actors, many of whom are non-professionals—but especially to Donald Thompson who plays the quiet one.

This film could also have been called the lonely one, the lost one, the unloved one—for it is the story of a little Negro boy at the Wiltwyck School for Boys, a corrective school for youngsters who are started on the road toward delinquency. Donald refuses to talk—to the psychiatrist, to the other boys, to the teachers. He is hurt and he hides his hurt; and the lonely boy only feels more loneliness. But little by little we learn about the roots of Donald's troubles, and they are the same roots that started bending most of these boys in the wrong direction: no one loved these youngsters, no one wanted them.

But there is more to Donald's problems than lack of love. Flashbacks take us to Harlem, to the tenements where Donald lived with his nagging grandmother who didn't understand the boy at all, to the apartment where Donald visited his mother and step-father who showed no interest, to the streets where Donald moped on days he missed school. Obviously this is no pretty picture; it recalls Thomas Merton's description of Harlem and his indictment against all of us for being responsible for the rotten depths of our cities.

When "The Quiet One" gets into psychology, the film becomes much more than skillful reporting on the wrongs

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Canon George D. Smith, *Editor*

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of our civilization. Its handling of the intangible things that affected Donald and Donald's working his way out of the mental maze into which he had drifted are visualized in first-rate cinema. At no time does the psychiatrist depreciate Donald's courage in fighting to get on his feet. The psychiatrist and the counselor help Donald, but it's mainly Donald who must help himself; and the boy suffers greatly as he moves out of the loneliness, as he overcomes the hypersensitive jealousy, as he matures emotionally. The film uses psychological symbols well and is so intelligently made that any audience, although they may not consider this entertainment, will find "The Quiet One" stimulating and provocative.

This movie, which was made on a small budget, might well be the envy of many a big Hollywood producer; and perhaps the thing that Hollywood should notice most carefully (besides the film's good technique) is its sense of realism. Donald wins the battle with his own repressed personality and he is better equipped to face the future. But the future is seen realistically, and Donald's eyes, when he leaves Wiltwyck, will not be covered by rose-colored glasses. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books

Henry VIII and the Reformation. H. Maynard Smith, D. D. Oxon. Macmillan. $8.50.

THE STORY of the Reformation in England is complex. The original sources are vast and the facts from the first have been distorted by prejudice.

After reading Dr. H. Maynard Smith's *Henry VIII and the Reformation,* no one, whatever his allegiance, can feel much satisfaction in the sordid business. Apart from the heroism of the martyrs—and Henry burnt, hanged, hacked or butchered both Catholics and reformers alike—this is a sorry tale of pride, ambition, lust, greed, treachery, cruelty and cowardice. Henry VIII's England from 1530-1547 was about as merry a country as Hitler's Germany from 1935-1945.

Dr. Maynard Smith writes as an Anglican scholar. In some details other experts may disagree with a few of his conclusions or interpretations, but his narrative is clear, judicious, balanced and unprejudiced, and his book most readable, of the kind that keeps reviewers from going to bed betimes. He has a nice sense of character, though he might with advantage have given more pictorial detail and on occasion he shows a gentle irony. His general attitude may be illustrated by a passage from his chapter on the Cambridge reformers: "They were inspired by what in one sense was the re-discovery of the Bible, as a book that was something more than a volume of proof texts, a book in which the literal meaning was of the first importance. Saint Paul, for instance, became for them once more a living person, pursuing arguments to which they believed that they had found the key. They wished everyone to read these Scriptures for themselves, and that everyone should be free to interpret them as he would. They did not foresee the breaking-up of Christendom into a hundred sects, or the controversies and wars that would result from their teaching. They were good Bible Christians, but they were not good churchmen; their appeal was to the individual heart, and they forgot the social character of Christianity." This quotation is typical of the sanity of the whole volume.

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Nevertheless, there are great difficulties for an historian in an epoch so full of complicated detail and tangled issues. If he plans his narrative chronologically, it may easily become overcrowded and bewildering. As it is, Dr. Maynard Smith divides his book into two main parts—the Political Reformation and the Religious Reformation; but in fact and in time the two were inseparable. Moreover, this arrangement can readily become confusing because the chapters overlap and the reader must constantly readjust himself to the time scheme. It is a tax on the imagination, for instance, after noting on page 180 that Robert Barnes the Cambridge Reformer was burnt, to find him very much alive in the chapter on the universities on pp. 253-256, and burnt again on p. 360. However, this kind of difficulty may be inevitable, and perhaps there would have been greater confusion in any other arrangement.

Particularly valuable are the sober comments on the English translations of the Bible. The King James Version of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer are rightly regarded by Anglicans as the greatest treasures of their Church; but it is well to be reminded that the former was not so much a new translation as a conservative revision of the work of that cantankerous and unfortunate genius William Tyndale, and his more tactful but less scholarly colleague Niles Coverdale; or to remember that though Cranmer receives the credit for the Book of Common Prayer, it was mainly a translation of prayers from the Roman Liturgy. It has often been held against those whose sympathies were for the Old Faith that they opposed the translation of the Bible; but, notes Dr. Maynard Smith, "we ought to confess that much of the opposition they encountered was due to their own faults. The English version with Lutheran glosses was deliberately used as propaganda against the Church. The logic chopping of the Schoolmen had been confined to universities, but the battles about texts took place in the marketplace, and hop-gospellers were so violent that, at the end of Henry's reign, many doubted whether an open Bible was likely to prove a blessing to the nation."

The final masterpiece on the English Reformation has yet to be written; and probably it will come rather from the literary artist than the historian and in the form of drama rather than of history, biography, or fiction. There have been many plays about Henry VIII, some popular, none great. One day perhaps the supreme tragedy will emerge; but if so it will be a tragedy not of individuals but of a nation which (in Dr. Maynard Smith's words) was once "the most devout people in Europe," but thanks to the Reformation in two generations had become first confused and then indifferent to religion. In the meantime, Dr. H. Maynard Smith's *Henry VIII and the Reformation* is likely to remain one of the sanest and most readable guides for the common reader and for the student.

G. B. HARRISON.

The Lion Tamer. Bryan MacMahon. Dutton. $2.75.

ALL OF US draw daily on the great bank of Say. In its vaults are all the words in the world. How much we withdraw is decided by what we have been, how much we spend, by what we are. Most of us go, most of the time, to the three clock-faced tellers, Necessity and Routine and Chance. (To look at them is to know what time it is: or what time it is not.) Rarely, as we draw our money, do we waste wonder on where and how and

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why we dispose of the worn, chipped coins. But always moving quietly among us in the vast place are people going to other windows, to openings beyond the queues we usually frequent. And there, from the three tall tellers, Love and Joy and Sadness, they take the pieces of metal that seem, when they use them, to sparkle with the air of where and the glitter of how and the gleam of why. A special breed among these folk is the Irish story-teller. And a special man among the breed is Bryan MacMahon.

Mr. MacMahon was born in 1909, in the market town of Listowel, in County Kerry. Educated in the town's schools and in St. Patrick's College in Dublin, he won first honors, in 1945, from the Irish monthly, *The Bell,* for his story, "The Good Dead in the Green Hills"—which, together with twenty-one others, is in this book. He says of Listowel—where he still lives—"the market was not merely a place of prosaic buying and selling, but a place where characters are rounded and shaped like stones rolling over and over on the foreshore."

With the rounding and the shaping of lives lived out in a little seaside village in Kerry, he is here glowingly concerned. Peadar Feeney and Paddy the Taypot, Mickie Duv Larkin and Dinny the Club, Kathleen and Noreen and Aunt Annie, kitchen and street and public house, home land and farm land and bog land—all have life, have speech, have mutter and murmur in the tales he tells here. The voice is the voice of Ireland: but the matters given voice are part of the life of anyone, any time, anywhere. Mr. MacMahon's very real love for his people, his joy in the humor of their speech and the wit of their doing, the deep care and honesty in his vision of the sadness and the tragedy in their lives—these things shine like shaken lights through circle and shape.

There is no "typical story" in this book ("What constitutes the typical," says Mr. MacMahon, "has always been an oyster-bed of argument.") They are all so very good that one can only choose at random.

"The Lion Tamer," the title story, explains the mind of "the only Irish-born lion tamer there is." In "The Clarinet," to the tune of "God be good to you, Shone Cronin," a wonderful thing happens: "Mind you, to me, it was not wholly unexpected, when our town, that compact, intimate huddle scooped out of Kerry rawness, stirred in its foundations, sprigged and jogged, bucked and lurched, heaved itself up to the sun, levitated freely and sweetly, stretched its neck like a flighting mallard, proceeded softly through warm ether and after an aeon or so, complete with its waterworks, its fishery courts, its solitary privy and its sawdusty pubs, snuggled down into a land that was alien and wondrously sunny." In "Ballantierna in the Morning," there is a startling and moving vision of the night-time streets of Dublin—and among the figures in the vision is one known to everybody: "the theatre queues were composed of sexless, friendless, kinless persons who had voluntarily assembled thus in batches to make it easy for them to be gathered to God." In "Black Nets," biting impact is achieved when the story's twisted, blackened fisherman says to a golf-playing priest, "You'd better do something for us, Father." There are photographs of four people you saw yesterday in "The Ring" and "The Breadmaker," "The Glitterin' Man" and "The Dancer's Aunt." (And "The Egotists" and "The Corn Was Springing" are newsreel reports on those you may not have had the good fortune to see yesterday.) In "The End of the World," there is rich comedy with

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"the fine skin of truth" on it. (While in "The Will" and in "Gentlemen, This Is Armageddon!" the end of the world quietly takes place.) The prize-winning story, "The Good Dead in the Green Hills," chronicles a proper Irish funeral; and before it is over you have seen—and felt—the coming of a comma in the long, the very long, sentence of time.

By now you will have gathered that I think *The Lion Tamer* a fine and beautiful book. I do. The smell and the light and the lilt of life in an Irish village are in it. The man who put them there has drawn richly and wisely on the great bank of Say. With this, his first book, he enters the company of the finest Irish writers of our day.

MURRAY HICKEY LEY.

The Price Is Right. Jerome Weidman. Harcourt. $3.00.

THE Price Is Right is another for the lengthening shelf of documentaries on the mad New York world of advertising and promotion. Mr. Jerome Weidman has as clear a right to the delineation of the subvarieties of huckster as anybody going, and under most circumstances one would welcome his getting there first. *The Price Is Right,* a morality devoted to the reflection that the news syndicate business is not without flaws wider than Fifth Avenue at the Park, could, however, have come from any of several practiced hands. It is well to expect a fast book from Mr. Weidman, but, until now, not one which can be forgotten faster than it can be read.

Mr. Weidman's latest heel-hero is a lad with roots in the moral clarity of East Ninth Street; he has been further purified by the wars. Henry Cade gets his foot on the ladder by his expert wet-nursing of a successful and (therefore) moronic cartoonist. When the creator of "Letta Lone" is lured away by a large—or is the word mammoth?—syndicate, Cade saves the firm from bankruptcy and exacts a partnership for himself by signing up a home-spun columnist named Wally Pohl, whose daily letter to the world, "Pohl's Apart," it is suggested, electrifies the nation. The twilight created by the efforts of a larger and even more soulless syndicate to capture Pohl provides the dark events through which Cade must journey to integrity. Cade has ample cause to reflect before he is finished that the grandstand rules and the playing field rules resembled one another not at all. In fact, Mr. Weidman goes so far in righteousness as to preach the dismal creed that the small-time operator inevitably falls victim to the big boy. The bleak grandeur, say, of a Yale cum Park Avenue background is a compounded villainy before which lower middle-class morality always quails.

The book is an exercise in Broadway nominalism. It pushes to its logical and unrewarding extreme the substitution for the thing itself of the glib word, the easy slogan. By an elaborate kind of pun which is the stuff of most Broadway productions, things are named by words that to the initiate suggest, only possibly, their right names. The squinting reference of Pohl's name to Ernie Pyle's, for example, is called upon to perform the novelist's whole duty, which is making, not naming. Before the first chapter was out, Mr. Weidman made an unusual mistake for him, and a fatal one for his intention; he became benevolent. Having accepted as genuine the phoniness of Pohl's column, he has no place for his fulcrum; he cannot then attribute phoniness to the huckstering uses to which it is put. His book is an attempt to cope with a two-dimensional world which itself remains two-dimensional. It achieves complacence and a clumsy humor, but no tang.

RILEY HUGHES.

NO SUGAR?

It may be wishful thinking, but we believe giving up soft reading for Lent is almost as dangerous as giving up sugar in your coffee: you may develop a taste for sugarless coffee on the one hand or for Sheed & Ward books on the other. Probably you knew this long ago. Anyhow, there are three new books of a nourishing but unsugary sort just going to be published. **RELIGION AND CULTURE** by **Christopher Dawson** comes on March 1st and will cost $3.50. Having read the chapter of it reproduced in this magazine, you know whether you want it or not: we imagine you do. **Caryll Houselander's** new book has the rather startling title **THE PASSION OF THE INFANT CHRIST** (March 7th, $1.75). Her theme is the redemptive Childhood of Our Lord—the spirituality of childhood, she believes, is badly needed by this over-tired and over-wise world.

If you think that everything has been said about the new movements to re-Christianize France, we sympathize with you, in a way, but you couldn't be more wrong, and you will admit it on reading **Maisie Ward's FRANCE PAGAN?** (March 14th, $3.00). She begins with a life of Abbe Godin (did you know he was really responsible for the whole thing?), then gives a translation of his book *France, Pays de Mission* (which has sold 100,000 in the French edition), and ends with an evaluation of what has really been accomplished so far. The Cure d'Ars used to be our favorite French priest, now we aren't so sure . . . Maisie Ward's portrait of Abbe Godin is enchanting, and so are the Abbe's portraits of his darling converts from paganism—ready to convert the world (with their fists for choice) but in the meantime causing no small scandal to their fellow-Catholics.

Naturally we haven't yet seen *The Commonweal's* list of books for Lenten reading and only hope they have done as well by us as Msgr. Fulton Sheen who chose **seven** Sheed & Ward books for the Catholic Lenten reading list this year. Ha! The seven are: **THE MASS IN SLOW MOTION** by **Msgr. Knox** ($2.50), and his translation of the **OLD TESTAMENT** (Vol. I, $7); **A TREASURY OF RUSSIAN SPIRITUALITY** edited by **G. P. Fedotov** ($6.50); **THE FAITH MAKES SENSE** by **Father Heenan** ($3); **ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI** by **Otto Karrer** ($3); **PRIEST-WORKMAN IN GERMANY** by **Henri Perrin, S.J.** ($2.50); and **YOUNG MR. NEWMAN** by **Maisie Ward** ($4.50).

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The Teaching of the Catholic Church. A summary of Catholic Doctrine arranged and edited by George D. Smith. 2 Vol. Macmillan. $12.50.

IF THE *Catholic Encyclopaedia* is not included on library shelves because no one is expected to read it from cover to cover, *The Teaching of the Catholic Church* would also be banished. Of course there may be people, avid for learning, who would read these two volumes in their entirety, but they would be few in comparison with the tens of thousands who will seek them for brief or protracted references. Their scope is that of the fulness of the Church's doctrines and it is doubtful that any could wisely overlook their value. Perhaps this is only a roundabout method of reporting that this summary is distinctly one that no library worthy of any serious reputation can afford to lack.

In major part those who have read any of the admirable *Treasury of the Faith* series, written by many eminent authors and published over the years by Macmillan, will be familiar with the dominant characteristics of these two volumes. For they contain all the small books of the series, carefully arranged by Canon George D. Smith, of St. Edmund's College, England. In addition Dr. Smith has contributed not only the "Introductory"—"Faith and Revealed Truth" and "An Outline of Catholic Teaching"—but other introductions to various contributions. To him, also, is due the splendid analytical list of contents—one for each volume—which enables the reader quickly to find his way through 1,300 pages. And lastly, there is the very extensive and complete Index which in a sense is the crown of the editor's scholarly achievement.

For those unfamiliar with the series here collected, some idea of the contents can be had from the following list of titles and authors: "The One God," by the Rev. A. L. Reys; "Divine Providence," by the Rev. Richard Downey; "Man and His Destiny," by C. C. Martindale, S.J.; "Jesus Christ, the Model of Manhood," by Archbishop Goodier; "Christ, Priest and Redeemer," by Martin C. D'Arcy, S.J.; "Mary, Mother of God," by O. R. Vassall-Philips, C.SS.R.; "Death and Judgment," by Abbot Anscar Vonier, O.S.B. These subjects, and all of the entire cross-sweep of doctrine, are treated in highly readable prose for which the average reader needs no knowledge of a purely technical language.

The publisher of *The Treasury of the Faith Series* has been numerously complimented on its contribution at the time each book was issued; in making the series available in two volumes Macmillan has performed a notable service to readers, Catholic and non-Catholic alike.

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

The Greatest Story Ever Told. Fulton Oursler. Doubleday. $2.95.

EVER SINCE the first Sunday of January, 1947, larger and larger audiences have been listening to the stories from the New Testament broadcast in the half-hour sponsored by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, know as "The Greatest Story Ever Told." The MS which inspired them was begun by Mr. Oursler after a visit to the Holy Land in 1937 which resulted in his renouncing his agnosticism and ultimately joining the Catholic Church. The book he has now published is a fictionalized life of Christ. As a senior editor of the immensely successful *Reader's Digest,* Mr. Oursler must know his public but it gives one an involuntary shock to

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accept the suggestion that the *Greatest Story Ever Told* can ever be a welcome supplement or provide an incentive to read the Gospels. The author uses what he must consider the language of the average citizen and doesn't shrink from having his apostles "yank" or "budge" or "blabber." He relishes such homely descriptions as: "Simon milked his beard and shook his bald head and wrinkled his freckled nose." A bit later, he dries "his enormous toes."

Where the Evangelists draw so sensitive a veil across the espousal of Mary and Joseph, Mr. Oursler hasn't hesitated to suggest their conversation. After the Annunciation, he pictures Mary writing a hurried note to her Mother and running away by night to Saint Elizabeth. He imagines Saint Anne as present in the stable at Bethlehem, which Catholic art has always peopled with angels. Determined to humanize the Nativity—in a familiar but not heretical sense—Saint Joseph is shown as the traditional man pacing up and down outside, but although the author is evidently overflowing with love and sympathy for the Holy Family, it is hard to understand how he conceives Our Lady as being "scared." On the other hand, that Saint Joseph used the Magi's gifts to pay for the flight into Egypt seems a valid and practical suggestion.

Mr. Oursler does not confuse Mary of Bethany with Mary of Magdala but in the rebuke to Martha, he believes that Our Lord was encouraging the intellectual rebellion of the modern woman. In common with Dr. Walsh, Mr. Oursler thinks that Andrew and Peter and John never left Our Lord after their first meeting at the Jordan which seems to minimize the splendid episode of their throwing down their nets by the seashore to follow Him. "Two Pigeons, Please!"; "Kill Them All!"; "The Caterer Is Amazed"; "The Political Boss"; "The Drunken King" are the titles of some of the chapters.

Certainly there can be no more fateful task than to attempt to paraphrase the ideal narrative of the ages. The best chronology that I know of Our Lord's public years is from the French of Malanie Marnas (*Who Is Then this Man?*). But there can be no question of the fine intentions of Fulton Oursler—"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace"—and one can only trust *The Greatest Story Ever Told* reaches the public for whom it may mean something and for whom it was written.

E. V. R. WYATT.

OTHER RECENT CATHOLIC BOOKS

WITH the observance of Catholic Book Week this year for the first time as an integral part of Catholic Press Month, it is fitting to call attention to current Catholic titles of more than passing interest. Thomas Merton's *The Seven Storey Mountain* (Harcourt, $3.00) continues to astound the booksellers and is autobiography of unusual human interest but as a means autobiography of unusual human interest but as a mean of achieving peace of mind. A small volume which is receiving little if any play from the booksellers, *On Pilgrimage,* by Dorothy Day (Catholic Worker, $1.00), is also particularly rewarding. In the biographical field there are two other volumes particularly worthy of mention: *Young Mr. Newman,* by Maisie Ward (Sheed, $4.50), and *High Road in Tartary,* by Abbe Huc (Scribners, $2.75), which is an engaging account of an arduous

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This book was recommended in a selected list, "The Season's Books," in *The Commonweal;* it was listed by the *New York Herald Tribune* among "Outstanding Books of 1948"; and it is a recommendation of The Religious Book Club. "One of the most brilliant minds of all time."—*Current History* $5.00

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Last Call

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Next week begins a series of articles which indicate the quality of COMMONWEAL material to be published during Lent. The author is Damasus Winzen, O.S.B., formerly of the Abbey of Maria Laach, and now chaplain at Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut. Each week during the coming Lenten season, and including Easter, the COMMONWEAL will publish one of the traditional Symbols of Christ from the Old Testament or the New, together with Father Damasus's explanation of its basic meaning.

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missionary journey of a century ago. Father George's *God's Underground* (Appleton-Century, $3.00) tells of the religious longings and resistance behind the Iron Curtain, and raises the question whether liberation from without can come about without a war against Russia, while Walter Nigg's *Great Saints* (Regnery, $4.75) is an extremely sympathetic Protestant work.

Among strictly spiritual volumes there is *Transformation in Christ,* by Dietrich von Hildebrand (Longmans, $4.00), an eloquent preachment by one of our most learned lay contemporaries. *The Three Ages of the Interior Life,* Volume II, by Garrigou-Lagrange (Herder, $7.50), having to do with the illuminative and unitive stages, continues to reflect the French Dominican's conviction as to the universal vocation to the mystical life. Another impressive volume is *Treasury of Russian Spirituality,* by G. P. Fedotov (Sheed, $6.50). Longmans continues to bring out its 20-volume edition of Cardinal Newman, and its latest two are particularly appropriate here, *Sermons and Discourses*: 1825-1857 ($3.50 each).

There are two noteworthy collections of short stories: 19 *Stories,* by Graham Greene (Viking, $2.75), which includes "The Hint of an Explanation," and *The Man Who Invented Sin and other Stories,* by Sean O'Faolain (Devin, $2.75), which deals with Irish themes.

Among the recent volumes on the liturgy is Martin B. Hellriegel's *Vine and Branches,* Volume 1 (Pio Decimo, St. Louis, $4.00), which deals with the Advent-Pentecost cycle. The first three volumes of fifteen on the Liturgical Year, by Abbot Guéranger, have been brought out by Newman at $4.00. Then there is the eloquent study by Rev. Gerald Ellard, S.J., *The Mass of the Future* (Bruce, $4.00).

This list would be incomplete without Ronald Knox's translation of the Old Testament (Sheed, $7.00). In his *Popular History of the Church* (Macmillan, $3.50) Philip Hughes does a Dr. Somervell on his own solid three-volume history. *The Sacred Fortress,* by Otto G. von Simson (Chicago, $10.00) is a fascinating excursion into archeology, history and liturgical inquiry in the high period of Ravenna around 600 A. D. How science and religion can harmonize is well indicated in *The Road to Reason,* by Lecomte du Noüy (Longmans, $3.50). Christopher Dawson's 1947 Gifford lectures appear next week in book form, *Religion and Culture* (Sheed, $2.75), and provide much documentation from all stages of human history for his basic thesis that religion is at the heart of every culture. For the philosophic-minded, Jacques Maritain's *Existence and the Existent* (Pantheon, $3.00) will be a rewarding commentary on Existentialism.

CONTRIBUTORS

Dr .Clement DE HAAS of Wassenaar, Holland, is a contributor to English and Continental periodicals.

Christopher DAWSON is the English social historian, the author of "The Making of Europe." His latest work, "Religion and Culture," will be published next week by Sheed and Ward; his article is an excerpt from this book.

G. B. HARRISON is the English Shakespearean scholar who is presently teaching at Queens University, Ontario.

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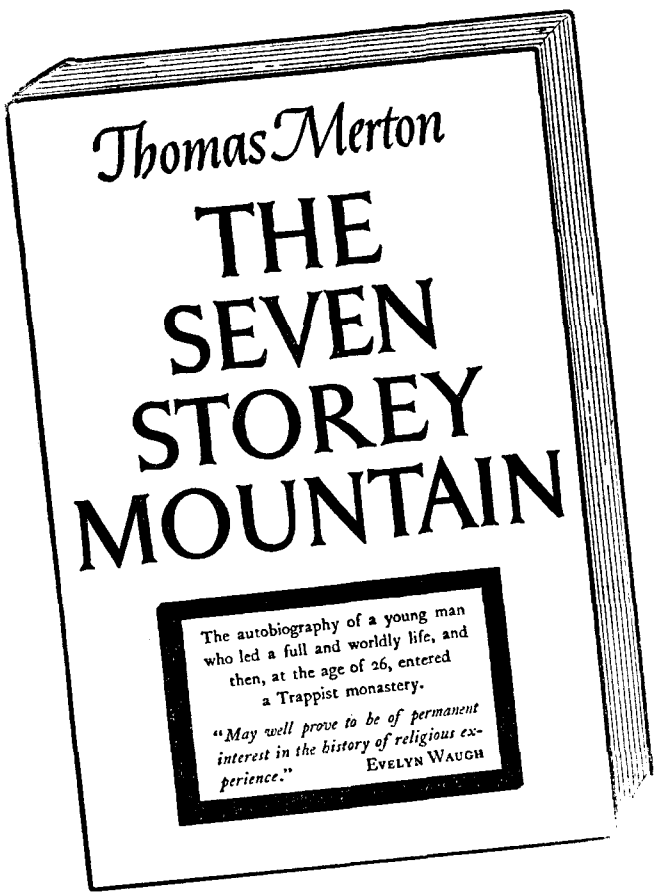
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